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ABSTRACT

Advocates of differentiated staffing suggest that teaching duties could be categorized to allow for different interests, abilities, and ambitions. Differentiated staffing, the ultimate outgrowth of innovations such as team teaching, nongraded programs, teacher aides, and open space planning, utilizes teachers to the maximum. Because it eliminates the burden of subprofessional work and bases the salary schedule on the degree of responsibility, differentiated staffing promotes professional development and increases the responsibility and expertise of teachers.
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WHY NOT DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING?

Speaker

Mrs. Carey Snyder, Member

Fort Worth (Texas) School Board

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Bismarck Public School District #1
Bismarck, N. D.

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Meredith, N. H.

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Educational Facilities Corp.
Chicago, Ill.

EA 003 676

THANK YOU, MME CHAIRMAN.

Distinguished panel members and participants in Clinic #36 -

"WHY NOT DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING?"

When I was first approached to be the speaker in this clinic, the rhetoric of the title caused me to ask this question:

Should I be FOR it, AGAINST it, or BOTH?

I did not receive a reply,

So here goes!

Now as I understand it

My job is to talk to you

Your job is to listen to me

and If you get through before I do

I hope you will let me know.

Let's first establish and understand

I AM NOT SPEAKING AS AN AUTHORITY OR AS AN EXPERT BUT AS A LONGTIME BOARD MEMBER WITH A REAL INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT, realizing that not all that is new is necessarily good, nor all that is old is necessarily bad.

WHY NOT DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING?

Mrs. Carey Snyder, Fort Worth, Texas

Member Fort Worth Board of Education 1959-1971

To quote the paragraph in your program concerning this Clinic #36 "Education, our critics are quick to point out, is the only 'profession' that rewards not on performance, but on longevity. The system perpetuates, even encourages, mediocrity in the classroom. Is there a way to pay teachers commensurate with their varied and differentiated responsibility, and more important with their results with the youngsters?"

"WHY NOT DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING?"

Would differentiated staffing provide an effective means to "audit the product?

Differentiated staffing is a method of using teachers. The idea is 180 degrees about-face from the single salary schedule which supplanted the older system or practice of individual bargaining, based on friendship, politics, and favoritism. The concept of differentiated staffing is said "to be rocking the boat, raising hurrahs in some quarters and hackles in others."

The concept is an outgrowth and extension of team teaching, recognizing the fact that there is a diversity of teaching tasks. Advocates of differentiated staffing suggest that teaching duties could be categorized to allow for different interests, different abilities, and different ambitions. It calls for differentiating salary in terms of responsibilities assumed, and allows for both a training and career-ladder. Differentiated staffing is a refinement of team teaching and pay is a necessary part.

The National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards has been a prime mover for differentiated staffing in schools. The Commission defines the plan for recruitment, preparation, induction, and continuing education of staff personnel for the schools which could bring a broader range of manpower to education than is now available. Such arrangements might facilitate individual professional development to prepare for increased expertise and responsibility as teachers, which would lead to increased satisfaction, status, and material reward, according to their definition. (#1) (#3)

This approach would provide that teachers who have more responsibility, make more decisions and work longer hours, receive more pay for their efforts, in the opinion of Donald Mair, acting superintendent of Kansas City, Missouri, where a differentiated staffing plan is under way. (#1, p. 1)

"Pay according to the complexity and demands of new tasks" is the description of the plan by the director of the Division of Teacher Education and Certification of the New York State Education Department. (#1, p. 1)

Advocates of the plan maintain that the chief thrust is to upgrade the quality of instruction in the classroom, and to provide more individualized learning programs for students. It allows for full utilization of talents of master teachers, releasing them from non-teaching duties of counting paper clips.

In the ten-year-period from 1957 to 1967, school years were extended upward and downward; curriculum was revised from top to bottom; schools became a focal point for protest and reform; schools joined in innovation and revolution; but the old piano player just kept on playing the only tune he knew, and most people did not want to knock him when he was doing the best he could.

With the advent of team teaching (or teaching-teams as some prefer to call the innovation), non-graded programs, use of teacher aides, and open space planning, we have pushed aside the self-contained teacher, the self-contained classroom and the self-contained school. Differentiated staffing is the ultimate outgrowth of the steps, and it would seem that we have gone full circle back to the one-room school, where students worked independently. The concept of differentiated staffing will give the teacher a staff, not only helping the students, but helping the teacher to work in an

atmosphere and environment to grow professionally, to do more work in any nine months than to just vegetate -- or gestate.

The single salary schedule has strong advocates who are violently opposed to differentiated staffing because they believe it to be "camouflaged merit-pay." This position is held by Gary D. Watts, head of the NEA Division of Field Services. (#1, p. 2)

Roy Edelfelt, executive secretary of the National Commission on Teacher Education insists that "Merit pay means salary differential based on quality of performance in situations where every teacher has a similar task and the same degrees of responsibility." Differentiated staffing, on the other hand, would establish salary differentials based on differences in degree of responsibility." (#1)

Proponents of differentiated staffing include deans and professors of schools of education, while the list of opponents include: state education association field men, union leaders, and local urban executive secretaries.

"The teaching profession," according to John Gardner, former HEW secretary, "is one of the few in which the time of a superb professional with 20 or 30 years' experience is used in just about the same way as the day he first walked into the classroom." (#1, p. 3)

Professional-standards spokesmen contend that a teacher is still expected to be a generalist in an age when knowledge is being compounded daily, and that it is impossible for any one "to know it all." Other professions have

recognized the need for role differentiation, such as the draftsman in architecture; the intern and resident and associate in medicine; the chemical analyst in science; and the junior partner and law clerk in the legal profession. (#1, p. 3)

In the field of architecture alone six years are required for a BA degree, then 3 years apprenticeship before the lengthy tests and licensing.

Most of the talk today is about meeting the individual needs of the students, and the area of individual differences among teachers has received little or no attention. "Common sense tells us," according to Dwight Allen, dean of the College of Education at the University of Massachusetts, "that the needs of the student unlucky enough to sit out the year in a math class taught by an incompetent teacher are not being met, to say nothing of the needs of the teacher, who may be highly competent to plan a new algebra course or who may be a master at small group instruction. Neither the student, the teacher, nor education is served with staffing patterns that allow this kind of thing to happen." (#1, p. 3)

"No single individual has the competence, energy and time to deal effectively with all responsibilities assigned to one teacher. No teacher can afford to operate in the isolated and insulated manner which has characterized many self-contained classrooms," according to Carolyn Tillotson, editor of the NEWS, publication of the National Committee for Support of Public Schools. (#2)

It seems strange to me that, although the Education Professions Development Act of 1967 is almost four years old, so little is known by the layman, or even by board members from their staffs, of the proposal to redesign the education profession. This act encourages experimentation with differentiated staffing, at both the professional and nonprofessional levels.

In January 1970 it was estimated that there were more than 220 demonstration centers with some element of the differentiated concept in operation.

The differentiated staffing concept is so flexible, that it is a wonder to me that the idea did not triumph over and above the single-salary-scale way back there. It would have, in my opinion, if administrators and supervisory personnel had been willing to assume the judgmental role that men in industry must assume every day. It is as simple as that, I believe.

There seems to be a reluctance on the part of educators to permit others to pass judgment on their performance, and as great a reluctance on their part to pass judgment on another's performance when it involves renewal or continuation of a contract. Now with the advent of the continuing contract monster, and the provision that surplus teachers will be released in order of seniority, it would appear that we shall never get to a recognition of skills and competency.

Staff members have dodged the merit-pay-plan, and now it would seem we are confronted with two longer words and a mammoth task at reorganization, requiring decisions on responsibility levels, job descriptions, assignment of teachers, and the reorganization of basic structures. To make maximum

use of teacher time and talents, flexible scheduling is an essential element in Differentiated Staffing. Even though experience dictates that teachers need to be involved, even this involvement has not guaranteed acceptance.

The public believes -- and perhaps rightly so to some degree -- that no one in Education wants the public to know how "BAD" things are.

Why do educators drag their feet on national assessment?

Why do we continue to refuse to audit the product?

Of course we all know that the average is merely the best of the bad and the worst of the good.

In my 12 years on the board, I have heard teachers ask to be relieved of all clerical duties --- and at the same time want substantial raises each year just for living another year. We went to the computer for all clerical duties; now they tell me they would be glad to go back to clerical duties because they don't like bubbling computer forms.

I have also heard school nurses ask to be relieved of clerical duties so they could nurse --- just let us nurse! After five months of a pilot program they, too, are convinced that <u>with</u> the aides, they still had more schools and more pupils and more problems.

Less Work --- More Pay.

Sometimes the sheer force that is required to carry a reform to success is strong enough to carry it beyond reason, so that it becomes necessary to reform the reform.

In their publication, INNOVATION IN EDUCATION: NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN SCHOOL, in July 1968 the Committee for Economic Development issued a statement of the policy and research committee urging that consideration of changes in staffing, certification, and salary schedules. School boards were urged to "undertake a reconstruction of the basis for teacher compensation to bring pay scales more in conformity with the functions, responsibilities, and performance of teachers. Such pay scales should also take into account the shortages in certain teaching skills." (#4, p. 50)

"The Differentiation of teaching staffs by introducing such categories as master teacher, assistant teacher, interns, and media technicians should improve competence for specific tasks and raise the level of professional morale and dignity among teachers.

"Flexibility in scheduling, school architecture, programming and in the general use of time and talent should make teaching more attractive and rewarding." (#4, p. 49)

The research and policy committee regards the common practice of basing teacher salaries on seniority and the accumulation of college credits as a serious block to the recruitment and retention of countless teachers (countless competent teachers), and to eliciting the best efforts of teaching staffs. They believe that the variety of talent, the preparation and competence required for effective and efficient teaching, justifies differentiated pay scales. They further believe that standard practices in the payment of teachers are unfair to teachers of uncommon ability, or those charged with special responsibilities. (#4, p. 49)

Whether real differentiated staffing is likely to cost more than the old system of uniform pay based on length of service is subject to serious debate. Clara Cockerille of Westminster College at New Wilmington, Pa., thinks it will because teachers in the hierarchy will be paid more, and more para-professionals will be required, in her opinion. (#1, p. 8) Others believe that a more effective job can be done on 15% less.

While some view with alarm that the flexible staffing pattern is merely a device to introduce merit rating in disguise, and the counter contention that the objective is quality and not quantity, some fear that people committed to change might "move too quickly" without recognizing the need for a comparable change in the role of administrators. (#1, pp. 8, 9)

As to the charge that people committed to change might move too quickly, I am aware that one system even in the face of a tight budget has channeled many dollars into tearing out walls where they could be torn out structurally and carpeting the entire area. My Scotch blood would lead me to take the position that much of the programming and planning could be achieved without extensive changes in the physical setup. Let's see if we can try this without adding the problem of bad acoustics to something we would like to try to improve the learning situation. Quality of education cannot be measured by the number of square feet of carpeting in the library.

It has been pointed out that it takes about 50 years for every state to catch up with a new practice in education (that it took years for high school libraries to catch on, according to NCTEPS' Bernard McKenna), but with the

present momentum of many systems trying the concept and plan in various forms, and the strong thrust for it by the federal government, it should be in use fairly widely in 15 or 20 years, McKenna thinks. (#1, p. 9)

Dwight Allen points out that "The pressures being placed upon education to accept more responsibility for the future of society leaves no room for comfortable mediocrity. The issue is fast becoming a simple one, one of whether change will be compulsive or rational. It is time to accept our obligation to be rational by building a professional staff organization under which learning can occur by design rather than by accident." (#1, p. 9)

Much of the teacher's time is spent in performing the technician's routine mechanical work, the same kind of work every day and several times a day. Why should not this work be done by a person of lesser skill for less money? Persons with a lower level of training could perform these tasks for less money, engage in training for a career in teaching, working on the rungs of that ladder, while being in a position to observe the master teacher at work. In-service training of the highest order? Back to the apprentice system? What ever happened to cadet-teachers? It was replaced by the six-week period of floundering around on the part of the student with a visit one time during that period by the college professor in a situation that wasn't real. Then later we "allowed" the student a semester of classroom activity with varied degrees of responsibility.

Studies have been cited to prove that the decrease in teacher-pupil ratio has no effect on the learning process if that teacher is doing the same thing she did when she had twice as many pupils.

Through the traditional system, a brand new teacher is brought in and placed in charge of a class, exactly as the teacher who has been on the scene 20 or 30 years. There is no real induction period, and little or no orientation other than a crash program of one or two or three days. In a differentiated and flexible staffing pattern, the new teacher could come in as a technician, then work up to a position of higher responsibility, ultimately to the position of the master teacher. It would be our fervent hope that the system would not operate at the peak of inefficiency, where everybody is promoted and promoted and promoted just because they have lived another year until they eventually get one step beyond their capabilities and are frozen in that position. What would be wrong with a system that would be willing to admit that a superior teacher in the classroom could make a lousy principal, that a superior principal might make a lousy administrator in the central office? The person in education who is on the go continues to be promoted until he gets to a position he cannot or does not want to handle. So he is frozen there, where he is inefficient rather than to admit someone made a mistake, his talents go down the drain and children suffer, and society is the loser.

Here we are getting back to the reluctance of those in education to perform the judgmental role.

Early in 1961, J. Lloyd Trump and Dorsey Baynham authored a GUIDE TO BETTER SCHOOLS called FOCUS ON CHANGE highlighting: the use of educational specialists from outside the school district as an important element in improving job satisfaction and efficient use of professional competences; use of university students many of whom need or have outside employment (many times in areas alien to what they are training for) as teacher assistants; lightening class loads; reorganizing instruction; using technological aids; re-examination of curriculum; modifying schedules; recognizing individual differences and meeting individual needs; initiation of new salary schedules; using school spaces; using educational funds; improving teacher education; involving people; conducting research; evaluating change; and using imagination. (#5)

I share the fear by the time we get to embracing differentiated staffing there will be something new on the horizon -- If it is bad, we will embrace it promptly; but if it is good, we will proceed with caution.

Critics maintain that the present system treats teachers -- good ones and bad ones, mediocre ones, those not too bad, but not good either -- all alike. A superior teacher can reach his salary ceiling in a few years, but to continue to succeed he can make a breakthrough only by leaving the classroom and going into administration, or leaving the profession altogether.

There has been practically no attention given to individual differences among teachers. Staffing in the past has been based on the acceptance that differences in teachers, differences in teaching ability, do not exist, or it does not matter if differences do exist. (#1, p. 3)

John Gardner, former secretary of HEW, maintains that the teaching profession is one of the few in which the time and talents of a superior professional person with 20 or 30 years experience is used in just about the same way as the day he first walked into the classroom. (#1, p. 3) There has been much talk about meeting the individual needs of the student and up to the present time very little attention has been paid to the individual differences and competencies of the teacher, according to Dwight Allen. (#1, p. 3)

Differentiated staffing in the Fort Worth Public Schools began in the fall of 1968. The Leonard Middle School set the pattern by incorporating ten aides in the instructional program. The same year several high schools used non-certificated personnel as study hall monitors, releasing teachers from this duty.

Differentiated staffing to some degree is in 83 of the 117 schools: in 60 of the 85 elementary schools, 12 of the 17 middle schools, and 11 of the 15 high schools. A total of 167 paraprofessionals is involved.

> Teacher Aides may be used (1) to assist teachers, (2) to monitor student groups, and (3) to assume other responsibilities which do not require professional training, according to Board Policy.

Aides are not assigned to schools. They are requested by the principal and teachers to fill a need in a creative organizational structure. Each

program requesting aides is reviewed by the appropriate director and the assistant superintendent for administration. The aides are approved or disapproved based on what the teachers and principal propose to accomplish. This district does not have an equivalent ratio of aides to teachers. In contrast, some districts have established the criteria that two aides are the equivalent of one teacher when staffing patterns are developed.

A concluding point needs to be made that aides are not being hired to replace teachers. They are hired to upgrade the teacher and eliminate the need for teachers to do subprofessional tasks.

All of this could be done, using the existing physical arrangements, although some staffs consider it necessary to tear out inner walls and carpet all outdoors.

As a matter of fact, the best program (admitted by others) we have at the present time is in a school where there has been no structural change in the building. (Oakhurst Elementary School, 2700 Yucca, Fort Worth, Texas 76111 -- Don Couch is principal.)

For the 1971-72 school year plans are being developed to enlarge the differentiated staffing concept. An in-service meeting was held for all principals to review the concept of differentiated staffing. One of the released time in-service days was devoted to explaining to teachers, at the building level, how a school might be reorganized to utilize the talents of the staff.

Proposed plans of organization submitted by the principals are reviewed by an appropriate director to determine the extent to which aides can be used, or a way in which professionals can be used in a different way. Principals are working to develop a redistribution of personnel so a librarian or similar person could be added to the staff. Resource centers are being initiated in many schools and a need for permanent staffing has developed.

Problems associated with this program have been minimal. The biggest problem has been with the people involved not fully understanding what aides could or could not do. Some teachers misused aides by failing to let the aides do any type work except minor clerical duties. Some teachers were not experienced in directing the work of another adult. When this happened the aide was of little value to the teachers. Teachers had to learn to release subprofessional tasks, and spend their time in professional instructional matters.

At the opposite end of the scale some teachers allowed aides to become directly involved in the instruction of students. This generally occurred when an aide was a certificated teacher in her own right. At times aides of this caliber "took over" some of the teaching duties. As soon as this was known, principals were informed that aides work for and under the direction of a teacher or team. Again it was felt that lack of experience in directing the work of other adults contributed to this difficulty.

Another problem was caused by principals using the instructional aides as office clerks. This was stopped by the directors as soon as the practice was discovered. Again it was stressed that aides are assigned to teachers and not to administration.

As a general statement, problems which have developed in this particular program have been people-problems and not program-problems. For a program involving 83 schools and 167 aides the problems have been minimal.

AIDES IN FORT WORTH SCHOOLS

	No. of Schools	No. of Aides	Federal	Total
Elementary	57	54	158	212
Special	3	11		11
Middle	12	72	9	81
High	11	30		30
Health		20		20
Manpower		2		2
Adult Education		1		1
	83	190	167	357

If board members are reluctant to consider the concept of differentiated staffing, let them study the growing list of bond proposal failures. Or look at the decreasing percentage of marginal wins in the successful proposals. Bonds formerly passed in some areas by 11 to 1 in 1958, 7 to 1 in 1962, and barely 2 to 1 in more recent years.

Fenwick England, Director of the federally funded Arizona-Mesa differentiated staffing consortium project sees the problem as one of taxpayers demanding some proof that the pudding is better. Someone should accept the challenge and audit the product. Something must be done. Differentiated staffing could facilitate professional development to prepare for increased expertise and responsibility as teachers, which would lead to increased satisfaction, status, and material reward. (#1, p. 1)

If differentiated staffing could be refined to rotation of personnel with no stigma attached, it could become pay according to complexity and demands of new tasks, allow us to audit the product, assign teachers to tasks commensurate with their abilities and utilize talents.

#

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